

Appl. No. 10/659,442
Amendment dated April 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

REMARKS

In the January 4, 2005 Office Action, the claims 1 and 15 were objected to and claims 1-12 stand rejected in view of prior art, while claims 15-20 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claims 15-20 also were rejected for failing to indicate and to claim particularly and distinctly the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the January 4, 2005 Office Action, Applicant has amended claim 15, and has cancelled claims 1-14, and 21-30 as indicated above. Claim 15 was also amended to correct the form thereof. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. Thus, claims 15-20 are pending, with claim 15 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of above amendments and the following comments.

Election of Species

On page 2 of the Office Action, Applicant's election without traverse in the response filed November 29, 2004 was acknowledged. Thus, non-elected claims 13, 14, and 21-30 were withdrawn from further consideration.

Claim Objections

On pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action claims 1 and 15 were objected to for typographical errors. In response, Applicant has amended claim 15 and cancelled claim 1 to obviate the objections

Specifically, in lines 19-20 of claim 15, the recitation of "a rotationally facing ends" has been amended to read -- rotationally facing ends--.

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Applicant believes that the claims are now correct. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In response, Applicant has amended claim 15 to clarify claims 15-20.

Specifically, the phrase "when coupled" has been deleted in claim 15.

Applicant believes that the claims now comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

On pages 3 and 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-5, 7, and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0011621 (Bauer et al.). In response, Applicant has cancelled those claims.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

On pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action, claims 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0011621 (Bauer et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,732,804 (Wienholt) or U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0052443 A1 (Tomiyama et al.). In response, Applicant has cancelled those claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

On page 5 of the Office Action, claims 15-20 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. In response, Applicant has amended claims 15 to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph to place them in independent form. Thus, claims 15-20 are believed to be allowable.

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Prior Art Citation

In the Office Action, additional prior art references were made of record. Applicant believes that these references do not render the claimed invention obvious.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 15-20 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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